



**Federal Aviation
Administration**

FOCUSFAA

It's All About You

Issue 25 » March 14, 2006



The Right Thing To Do	03
A Reassuring Voice	05
Get On The Right Page	07
Tower of Babble?	09
Bigger Perspective	11
Your Two Cents	14
Now This	15
AOA Highlights	17

The Right Thing To Do

Somewhere in this country, Randy has a best friend who's a total stranger.

Randy is the fictitious name for an unidentified young male — likely African-American — who recently received a critical, potentially life-saving bone marrow donation from Judith Braxton, an operations supervisor at the Seattle TRACON.

Braxton sounded remarkably low-key considering the saga, which began a decade ago, includes an unpleasant procedure, and could well have saved a person's life. "I don't think I have a choice," she said, referring to her donation. "It seemed like the right thing to do."

It was 10 years ago at the national convention of the National Black Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees that Braxton answered a call to all members to register as potential blood marrow donors. She was typed at A-, a hard match normally for anyone with that blood type, but made more difficult for African-Americans because of their DNA makeup and their history of multiculturalism. Also, there were not a lot of donors then listed on the national register.

Last December, Braxton learned that a young male was suffering from chronic myelogenous leukemia. Braxton was a perfect match. Beyond that, the only information Braxton received about the patient was



Judith Braxton

The Right Thing To Do

that he was likely African-American because his genetic marks were a match with hers.

As the day of the procedure approached, she began to fear the operation. "I had never had an operation before," she said. "It was very traumatic for me." But she never had second thoughts about going through with the procedure.

The squeamish might want to skip the next paragraph, which details the procedure.

Doctors insert a hollow needle in the area where the hips come together, where it's pushed through tissue and muscle, and into the middle of the bone. A second needle is placed inside the hollow tube to withdraw the marrow. The procedure was done three times on Braxton. Doctors took about a liter of marrow from her.

"It was as painful as they said it would be," admitted Braxton. She felt severe back pain and had trouble walking or bending. "Anybody who has had back pain would understand," she said. The pain slowly subsided over the course of a week or two. "I kept telling myself I've got the easy part compared to the things he's fighting through," Braxton said.

"It's a little discomfort, but it's a chance of life for somebody," she went on. "There's no reason not to do it." Braxton lauded the FAA as being "very supportive." The agency granted her seven days of blood donor leave that wasn't charged to her annual or sick leave.

By law neither party can know the other's identity for one year. At that point, if both Braxton and Randy agree, they can meet. What would Braxton say to Randy if the opportunity arose? "Probably, congratulations because he's lived a year. He'd won the battle." ✈

"It's a little discomfort, but it's a chance of life for somebody."

A Reassuring Voice

It's every parent's worst nightmare. Your child is sick, and you can't be there to comfort her.

She has problems breathing, sometimes passing out for up to half a minute before taking another breath.



Jazmn Thomas on her way to the hospital.

Then, in the middle of a tonsillectomy and having ear tubes put in, she suffers an asthma attack. Now, she has to be airlifted to a larger medical facility by three strangers in aviator's helmets.

It happened to 3-year-old Jazmn Thomas the day after Valentine's Day. Wearing an oxygen mask and clutching her Teddy Bear, she was being flown by helicopter from Tahlequah, Okla., to St. John's Medical Center in Tulsa. Her parents couldn't accompany her because of a lack of space, and had to make the 100-mile trip by car.

For a while in the chopper, Jazmn was doing just fine. But midway through the 25-minute trip, she started to get anxious, her eyes swelling with

A Reassuring Voice

tears. That's when she heard the comforting voice of Tim Crone saying her name on the radio.

Crone, a 19-year veteran air traffic controller at Tulsa Tower, describes what happened that day. "I was working a sector, when the [emergency medical services] pilot called up. He said he had a 3-year-old girl on board [crying], [and] wondered if I could say 'hi' to her. I was just assuming that she was the patient."

The crew put a headset on Jazmn. Then Crone went into Dad mode. "I said, 'Hi Jazmn, hope everything is okay. We're going to make sure that airplanes are out of your way and get you where you need to go.'" That's when Jazmn began to smile.

When other pilots heard the exchange on the radio, they chimed in as well, telling Jazmn it would be okay. "I have a heart for kids. Anytime I see a kid hurting, I hurt for them. I was picturing this little girl as if she was my daughter," added Crone.

The next day, Crone visited Jazmn in the hospital. He found her with her dad in the play area of the children's ward, surrounded by toys. He brought

her a card signed by everyone at the tower, a big balloon and another Teddy Bear, a gift from Crone's 8-year-old daughter, Collette. Jazmn loved the new bear, taking it wherever she went.

Before leaving, Crone invited Jazmn and her dad to visit the tower when she gets better.

Mark Boyer, the EMS professional who piloted Jazmn, expressed appreciation to not only Crone, but the whole air traffic control staff. He said, "Thanks for the fine job you all do on a daily basis and thank you so very much to [Tim Crone] for bringing joy to my flight deck during our life saving mission." ✈

Get On The Right Page

Issue 25 » March 14, 2006

Page 7

Operating more like a business sometimes means doing more with less — striving for new levels of efficiency at work.

That requires innovation to find and develop tools that leverage resources and help employees work smarter, not necessarily harder.

“KSN, or Knowledge Services Network, is a suite of services that allows employees to get more done and achieve greater results, but also to preserve resources,” said Gisele Mohler, manager of FAA’s Operational Evolution Plan (OEP) and a long time KSN user. More than 20,000 folks across the agency use KSN to collaborate with other government groups and stakeholders on aviation



rulemaking, contract management, strategic planning, aircraft evaluation, and incident management.

KSN is an online network that allows business teams and industry partners to collaborate, coordinate, access, post and distribute all the

latest information to all parties within minutes. Geographical limitations and time constraints are virtually non-existent — a team member can access information, documents and project management data, as well

Get On The Right Page

Issue 25 » March 14, 2006

Page 8

as participate in discussions at anytime from virtually anywhere on the Internet. KSN is available across the FAA as part of ATO's centralized support services.

Sometimes, just finding the latest version of a document in your electronic files and emails can be difficult — but KSN solves that problem. With KSN, meeting notes and information traditionally sent in emails are posted on a virtual meeting site along with documents and tools for planning and project management. KSN promotes communication and provides a repository from which to access huge amounts of data and documents. New team members can be brought up to speed on a project by accessing an archive of all project materials, from background data to the most current discussions and documents.

"When I joined the OEP team in 2002, the group was already using KSN. The OEP is all about coordinating and aligning strategies, programs, systems and activities across the agency and with the aviation community to expand capacity. We can't do that in a vacuum. . . KSN gives us a flexible, interactive, expandable system to work within," said Mohler.

KSN is an "intuitive" system that requires a modest amount of training. Ron Simmons and his team of co-captains provide reliable service to help employees get started with a custom tailored KSN site and program developed to their specifications ([click here to watch an interview with Simmons about KSN](#)).

"OEP is approaching 300 active members," said Mohler, "with representatives and participants from the head offices throughout all regions and levels — from

policy, strategy, tactical and administrative." Each of them can access the same information. "While there is no upfront cost to setting up a system, there is a modest investment of time and the need to identify a system administrator, but that is far outweighed by the value of this service in saving time for busy professionals and saving travel expenses," said Mohler.

"[As for OEP], thanks to KSN, we are surpassing our goals because we can get the right people together on the right page at the right time," Mohler commented.

For more information or to request a KSN site, access:

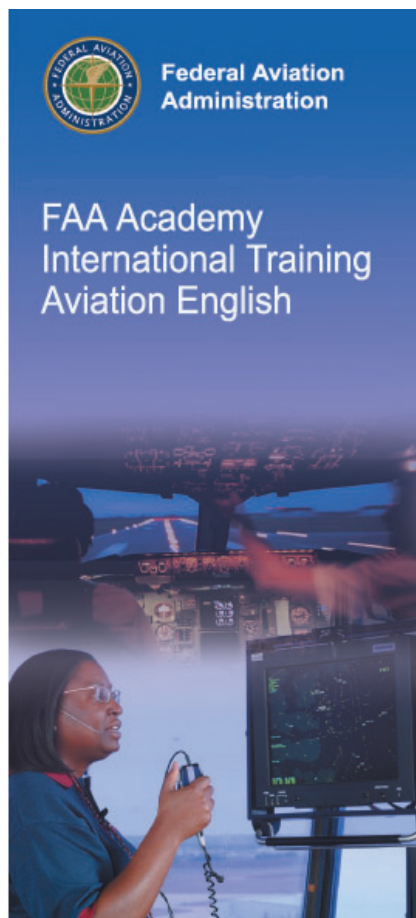
<http://employees.faa.gov/worktools/ksn/>. ✈



Gisele Mohler

Tower of Babble?

You'll recall in the story of the Tower of Babel, God stymied the efforts of humans by confusing their language,



making it impossible to communicate with each other. If that were an air traffic control tower, we'd be in a lot of trouble, as communication between the pilot and controller is vital.

That is the concern behind new language standards for the aviation community created by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). Even during the safest period in aviation history, FAA has the same concerns. So earlier this year, FAA entered into a joint research agreement with Ordinate Corp., a company that has developed a proven automated means for testing spoken English. The partnership will determine if an aviation English test can be developed to address the new ICAO requirements before they go into effect in March 2008.

The initial phase of research will include approximately 2,000 people. Graham Elliott, the FAA's manager for aviation language training and principle investigator on this project, said, "The

Tower of Babble?

research is attempting, as much as possible, to identify what English communication goes on between pilots and controllers, and be able to measure it according to the ICAO language proficiency requirements.”

If a baseline can be achieved, then the test can be used by civil aviation authorities to determine if pilots’ and controllers’ levels of English proficiency meet international standards. The ICAO standards are for each pilot and controller to be able to speak English well enough that they can deal “adequately with apparent misunderstandings by checking, confirming, or clarifying.”

The innovative project employs a voice engine to create a test that will automatically score a test taker’s level of English proficiency according to ICAO standards. (A voice engine is a software program that listens and responds to verbal commands and conversation — for instance when a caller responds to voice prompts on an automated phone line.)

The benefits of the aviation English test are far-reaching. Results could allow air carriers and air traffic service providers not only to determine how much additional

English training is needed, but whether and how often one’s English proficiency needs to be retested, and whether pilots and controllers can be licensed under the new ICAO rules.

While safety is the overriding goal of the collaboration, there’s also a financial benefit for FAA. Ordinate will not only reimburse research costs, but will also pay the FAA Academy a percentage of the sales from the test if it becomes commercially viable. Those funds, in turn, will be poured back into more research. And in these times of tight budgets, that’s good news.

And it hints at exciting research possibilities in the future. Other lines of business within the FAA might want to consider what intellectual property ideas exist in their offices, but haven’t been fully explored. These ideas may find fruition in future collaborative agreements.

Through this partnership, the FAA is once again demonstrating its commitment to the highest standards of safety, and its international leadership. And that’s one commitment that is sure to please the heavens.✈

Bigger Perspective

Two employees have been selected for the 2006 FAA/International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)

Fellowship program to represent the aviation interests of the agency and the United States.

Randy Moseng will be based in Montreal in ICAO's Air Navigation Bureau. He is an airport certification and safety inspector in the Southern Region.

Leslie Cary will be based in ICAO's North American, Central American and Caribbean office in Mexico City. She is an international program officer in the Air Traffic Organization.

Moseng and Cary begin their new positions in about two months. Those selected follow in the



Randy Moseng

Bigger Perspective

footsteps of predecessors who gained valuable insight into their jobs.

Colleen Donovan, Bob Smith and India Pinkney are returning to FAA after a year in Montreal. Donovan and Smith shared their experiences with Focus FAA.

“I love my job in DC, but I was ready for a new challenge,” said Donovan, who has been with the FAA since 1997. Donovan applied her avionics and human factors background to projects in the ICAO air navigation bureau’s personnel licensing and training section.

“Working at ICAO forces you to see the bigger picture perspective,” she said. She also helped develop guidance on electronic flight bags and head-up displays with enhanced vision. While these technologies are gaining in popularity in the United States and Europe, according to Donovan, many countries don’t have any idea how to deal with this new technology which, if introduced properly, could

have a major safety impact worldwide.

“Getting these standards in place will be a major victory,” she stated.

Bob Smith worked in ICAO’s communications, navigation, and surveillance section. The FAA/ICAO fellowship, said Smith, is an “excellent” program, particularly if you arrive with an open mind and are prepared to be flexible. “If you get upset because things don’t work out exactly the way you planned, this experience will be hard,” he added.

The Fellowship program was created in 2003 when Administrator Marion Blakey agreed to send agency employees yearly to ICAO headquarters in Montreal, Canada to work from six months to one year. It is an opportunity for FAA employees to network within



Colleen Donovan

Bigger Perspective

ICAO and bring back valuable international experience to the agency.

“This whole city feels like a mini-U.N.,” Donovan observed. “Montreal has so many people from other countries,” she said. “They really encourage you to get to know your co-workers on a personal level,” she said.

Smith pointed out that the fellowship program would be very valuable for people interested in applying for a longer-term ICAO assignment. “It helps immensely to have some ICAO experience. You’ve shown that you’re a good worker and that you’re going to do what needs to be done,” he explained.

The Fellowship program is open to employees in all lines of business and staff offices, and to those with a technical, clerical, or policy background. ICAO looks for a broad range of experts depending on the needs of each ICAO bureau.✈

Your Two Cents

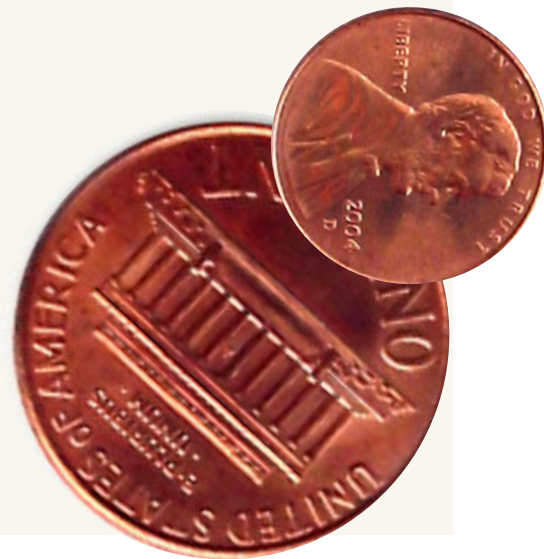
This issue of Focus FAA has an international theme surrounding the agency's dealings with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). The recent election for ICAO's secretary general's position, in which FAAer Bill Voss lost by one vote, is just one sign of this country's interest in expanding its influence in aviation matters around the world.

FAA has just selected two employees for its joint fellowship program with ICAO. Read about the experiences of past fellowship participants in "Bigger Perspective" under News. The agency also is working with ICAO on an aviation language course that will ensure international pilots and controllers have proficient language skills (see "Tower Of Babble?" under News).

Speaking of communication, we also feature a News story about the Knowledge Sharing Network that allows business teams and industry partners to collaborate, coordinate, access, post and distribute all the latest information about projects to all parties within minutes. Read about it in "Get On The Right Page."

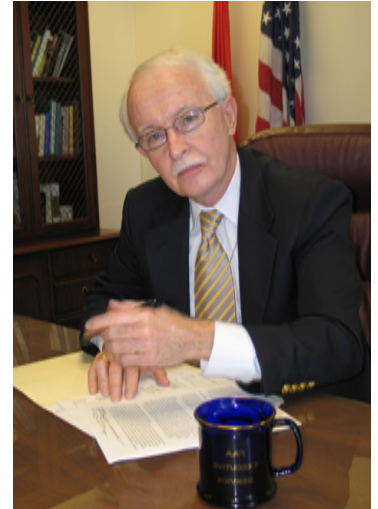
It should be no surprise there are a lot of good-hearted souls in this agency. Two of them are highlighted under People: Judith Braxton recently donated bone marrow to a patient with leukemia; and Tim Crone provided some personal attention to a frightened little girl being airlifted to a hospital.

Email your feedback to jim.tise@faa.gov. ✈



Now This

THE LATE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE TIP O'NEILL COINED THE PHRASE "ALL POLITICS IS LOCAL." THIS AND OTHER HOMESPUN RULES OF THE GAME ARE RELATED IN A BOOK BY THE SAME TITLE HE WROTE WITH HIS PRESS SECRETARY.



If you are looking for high-flown political theory, this is not the book for you. O'Neill's rules of the game are down home, even trite, but they worked to get him re-elected for 34 years and propelled him into the powerful Speaker's post. Among his other rules were: "Be in the right place at the right time" — "never criticize the family of an opponent" — "in politics, your word is everything" — "don't forget the people who elected you" — and "keep your speeches short."

His advice came to mind recently while I was home recovering from eye surgery.

Since I had to keep my head down for five weeks, I had a lot of time to reflect. On a professional level, I thought a lot about communications — what we could do differently, what we could do better. Frankly, there was so much to think about, it was a bit discouraging. Then Tip O'Neill's advice kicked in. Don't take yourself too seriously, I said to myself. FAA could have the best corporate communications program in the world, with all the bells and whistles, and we'd still get low numbers in communications on the Employee Attitude Survey.

Now This

Why? Because, as with politics, all communication is local. It should come as no surprise that two areas showing the most need for improvement in the last several Employee Attitude Surveys are increased managerial competence and better communications. Until we make the connection between the two and make communications one of the critical skills required of our executives and managers, we're going to get the same result year after year in both categories. No corporate communications program can make up for that lack, and no communications training after the fact can work magic on someone who should not have been selected in the first place.

Communications is not about technique — it's about attitude. People who understand at a gut level that information is indeed power, but only if they share it, have a good chance of being successful. There is no guarantee that a good communicator will become a good executive or manager, but no one has ever become a good executive or manager without being a good communicator.

Does that leave employees off the hook? Not at all. There's no greater cop-out in town than for employees to sit back and whine amongst themselves that their bosses don't communicate when they themselves do nothing to contribute to the dialogue. But, managers have a special obligation, it seems to me, to take the initiative and set the right tone.

In my 32 years at FAA, I can recall countless times when we failed by not sharing information in a timely manner, but I cannot recall one single instance of where we erred by sharing too much information too soon. It really comes down to this, in my opinion — tell 'em what you know when you know it. For obvious reasons, in this political atmosphere, that principle can't apply to every instance, but it can most of the time. And we at the Washington Headquarters level have to set the example at our local level. The buck starts here. ✈

Gerald E. Lavey
Deputy Assistant Administrator for
Internal Communications

AOA HIGHLIGHTS

Note: Please keep in mind that links to some outside publications mentioned in AOA Highlights work for only a few days and after that many publications no longer provide free access.

Mandell Leaving FAA – O'Malley to be Chief of Staff:

David Mandell, FAA's Chief of Staff, who came to FAA with Administrator Blakey from NTSB in the fall of 2002, is leaving FAA on March 17 to pursue a business opportunity, unrelated to transportation, with several of his friends. He will be replaced as Chief of Staff by Mike O'Malley, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy at DOT.

Speaking for myself and many others, I will miss David. A good guy with many talents, he brought enormous energy and focus to the job and that became infectious for all who

worked closely with him. He also was a great friend to us in communications and, rare among executives at that level, understood the importance of internal communications – not “internal communications” in the narrow sense of what we in the Office of Communications do, but in the larger sense.

New Chief of Staff in Focus: Mike O'Malley has been Deputy Assistant Secretary since 2005. From 2002 through early 2005, he served as Counselor to the Under Secretary for Policy. In that job, he helped to consolidate the Department's policy oversight in the new Office of the Under Secretary. He also helped to develop major legislative, regulatory, and programmatic initiatives, including the multi-year reauthorization of the Department of Transportation's aviation and surface programs, formulation

of its Next Generation Air Transportation System Initiative, and others.

Before joining DOT, O'Malley served as a Government Relations Advisor at Shaw Pittman LLP and as a Legislative Assistant to Governor Jim Edgar of Illinois. He attended the University of Illinois, where he received a bachelor of science in Finance, and also completed graduate studies at the London School of Economics.

The Times – They Are A'Changin':

The 31st Annual Aerospace Forecast Conference took place February 28-March 1 in Washington, DC, with a sharp focus on the twin challenges of achieving financial stability in the aviation industry and finding ways to fund the future aviation system. There is no consensus on either one

AOA HIGHLIGHTS

of those challenges, but it is becoming increasingly clear that these are genuine challenges and ones that we as an industry will have to find answers to in fairly short order because the taxes that feed the Trust Fund expire in 2007.

You can view the [FAA Aerospace Forecasts FY 2006-2017](#) on the public website.

FAA Reauthorization Proposal Due Out Soon, Says Mineta:

Secretary Mineta [testified](#) March 7 before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on the DOT's proposed FY 2007 budget. In discussing FAA and aviation, he talked mainly about the inadequacies of the current system for funding the FAA — which currently “is tied to the price of an airline ticket.” [In other venues, the Administrator has said we might just as well tie it to the price of a gallon of milk.] There is a “general

consensus that our growing aviation system needs a more stable and predictable revenue stream — one that creates a more direct relationship between revenues collected and services provided,” he said, and noted that the Bush Administration will soon propose a reauthorization plan “that will include a solid, forward-looking financing proposal for the Aviation Trust Fund.”

Airlines OK Proposal for FAA

Funding: U.S. airlines also have agreed on a proposal. See the Air Transport Association site for the features of [Smart Skies](#), “a national campaign by the Air Transport Association (ATA) and its 19 member airlines aimed at modernizing the United States National Airspace System (NAS), and the system's 35-year old funding mechanism.” The site includes two sections: Airspace Reform Concepts and Reauthorization

Statement of Principles. According to the *Los Angeles Times*, Herb Kelleher, Chairman of Southwest Airlines, said the plan took more than a year to negotiate. It was signed by airline chief executives in late February.

[The online *Aero News* ran a story about the same time as the *Los Angeles Times* piece that gave the mistaken impression that FAA and ATA had reached an agreement on a user-fee system to fund the national airspace system. That's not correct. The ATA member airlines reached an agreement among themselves. FAA was not involved. *Aero News* published a correction.]

Speaking of the ATA, it has developed an [interactive map](#). You can click on a state and it will show you how commercial aviation affects

AOA HIGHLIGHTS

the economy of the State and each of its Congressional districts. Very cool.

FAA and International Issues:

Although **Joe Bogosian, FAA's Assistant Administrator for International Aviation**, has been on board since September, we've never introduced him properly to the workforce. So, we sat down with Joe several weeks ago in the FAA studio to talk about FAA's international program and about his pre-FAA experience in international relations in the public sector at the Department of Commerce and prior to that in the private sector. The webcast interview, ["FAA's Leadership Role in World Aviation"](#) is available online.

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) held an election on February 27 to select the

next Secretary General of ICAO and one of the two candidates was FAA's own Bill Voss. He lost by one vote to the incumbent Dr. Taïeb Chérif of Algeria, the current Secretary General. As the Administrator stated in a message to all employees, "it was encouraging to see him in the running for such a high post. It's rare that a U.S. member to ICAO has been considered for a top leadership position in this organization, and it was particularly gratifying to see a long-time FAA employee be the first to be considered."

The politics of a vote like this go way above and beyond FAA and Bill Voss. Like other United Nations' organizations, member states are not keen on vesting U.S. representatives with any more clout than they "perceive" them to already have.

Mexico's Roberto Kobeh was elected as ICAO's new president, effective August 1. He will succeed Assad Kotaite. The other candidate was Philippe Rochat of Switzerland. Rochat served on the ICAO Council from 1985 to 1989 and was secretary general of the organization from 1991 to 1997. Gonzalez has been Mexico's ICAO representative since January 1998.

March 19-21, Administrator Blakey is leading a delegation to Montreal, Canada, to attend the International Civil Aviation Organization's "Conference of Directors General of Civil Aviation on Global Strategy for Aviation Safety."

Mediator Joins FAA-NATCA Contract Talks: NATCA President John Carr recently agreed to have a Federal

AOA HIGHLIGHTS

mediator join contract talks between FAA and NATCA, which resumed March 6 in Washington, D.C. and are scheduled to last two weeks. The Administrator called for mediation last November, as you may recall, but NATCA rejected the proposal at the time. According to the Washington Post, Carr changed his mind “after a two-week bargaining session in Seattle produced little progress.” Let’s hope the participation of a mediator can help the two sides reach a voluntary agreement. That’s in everybody’s best interest.

Books and Things: Recently, when I was out for six weeks recovering from eye surgery, I had an opportunity to “listen” to several books on CD. Four in particular I would recommend: *Team of Rivals* by Doris Kearns

Goodwin about Lincoln’s cabinet. Three of the cabinet members had challenged Lincoln for the 1860 Republican nomination for President – at least two of whom, Seward and Chase, thought they would have been a far better choice for President. In this book, you see still another side of Lincoln’s genius. *President Reagan* by Richard Reeves is an interesting, instructive read, as is *1776* by David McCullough. *The Year of Magical Thinking* by Joan Didion is a tough book because it “chronicles the year following the death of her husband, fellow writer John Gregory Dunne, from a massive heart attack on December 30, 2003, while the couple’s only daughter, Quintana, lay unconscious in a nearby hospital suffering from pneumonia and septic

shock,” as an Amazon.com review describes it. Sounds grim, and it is in a way, but it’s very human and real and brilliantly written.

The Last Word: An oldie but goodie. We first ran this several years ago in *ARA Highlights*, and recently Pete Kacerguis sent it around once again. Its advice is timeless, so we thought we’d run it again.

“When the Marketing 101 class began, the professor wordlessly picked up a large, empty glass mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed it was.

“The professor then picked up a jar of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles rolled into the open

AOA HIGHLIGHTS

spaces between the golf balls. He again asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed it was.

“The professor then picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar, and the sand filled the remaining spaces. He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with a unanimous yes.

“The professor then produced two cans of beer from under the table and proceeded to pour the entire contents into the jar, effectively filling the spaces between the grains of sand. The students laughed.

“‘Now,’ said the professor, as the laughter subsided, ‘I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life. The golf balls are the important things in your life, family, partner, friends, health and favorite passions if everything else was

lost and only they remained, your life would still be full.’

“‘The pebbles are the other things that matter, like your job, your house, your car. The sand is everything else, the small stuff.’

“‘If you put the sand into the jar first,’ he continued, ‘there is no room for the pebbles or golf balls. The same goes for your life. If you expend your time and energy on the small stuff, you’ll never have room for what is important to you. Pay attention to what is critical to your happiness. Play with your children. Take time to get medical checkups. Take your partner dancing. Play another 18.’

“‘There will always be time to go to work, clean the house, throw a dinner party, and fix the disposal. Take care of the golf balls first – they’re what really matters. Set your

priorities. The rest is just sand.’

“One of the students raised her hand and asked what the beer represented. The professor smiled, ‘I’m glad you asked. It just goes to show you that no matter how full your life may seem, there’s always room for a couple of beers’.” ✈

Gerald E. Lavey

**Deputy Assistant
Administrator for Internal
Communications**